

CHAP REPOSITORY  
SUNDAY READING.

THE  
FALL OF ADAM,  
OUR FIRST PARENT;

*With some Account of the  
CREATION of the WORLD;*

Shewing the happy State of Man in Paradise, and also the Sin and Misery which have entered since the Fall,

*To which are added,*

Some Remarks respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Second Adam, and the only Saviour of this World.



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THE  
LIFE OF ADAM.

OF HIS FIRST PARENT.

BY JOHN W. WOOD;

Author of "The History of the  
Life of Adam."



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THE

FALL *of* ADAM.

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HOW very difficult must it be for an unbeliever to give any tolerable account of the first making of the world.

We find ourselves living on this globe of earth, but we none of us know, (except so far as the Scripture teach us) how it was formed, nor at what period of time. Has the earth been from everlasting? That seems impossible, for it cannot have made itself. Who made it then? The Scriptures tell us it was God. But at what time? About six thousand years ago, as we may gather from the Bible, and there are many reasons for thinking (though we will not here dwell on that point) that it is not unlikely to have existed about some such space.

We will now speak briefly of the manner in which the world was made, and then proceed to our main subject, which is the formation of Adam.

and his fall. "In the beginning," says the Scripture that is, in the beginning of the history of our race) "God created the heavens and the earth  
 " and the earth was without form and void, that  
 " is, it was without regular shape or order) and  
 " darkness was on the face of the deep, and the  
 " Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.  
 " And God said, let there be light and there was  
 " light; and God saw the light that it was good;  
 " And God called the light, day—and the dark-  
 " ness called he night—and the evening and the  
 " morning were the first day."

The world having been thus made and brought into order on the first day, God proceeded on the second to make the firmament, that is, the air and atmosphere, by which he divided the waters which were on the earth from the watery clouds which were above it.

On the third day, (the earth having been as yet covered over with one universal sea) the waters were commanded to gather themselves together into one place, so that the dry land might appear, and at the same time the trees and herbs were created.

On the fourth day, God made those two great lights—the sun, or the greater light, to rule the day, and the moon, or the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.

On the fifth, all those living creatures, which either swim in the sea, or fly in the air, were called into existence.

And on the sixth, the cattle and living things which walk or creep on the earth.

And now, last of all, was made man, the lord of this wonderful creation.

There was evidently a plan in this procedure of the Almighty. The earth was first made, and next animals, and then man; just as an house is first built and set in order, and then the inhabitant walks into it.

But let us here take notice of the manner in which the making of man is spoken of. When God made the light, he said merely, "Let there be light, and there was light." When he made the beasts, he said only, "Let the earth bring forth the living thing after its kind;" but when man was about to be created, the Almighty is represented as saying, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness"—and it is added, "let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth. So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them."

What a being of dignity then is man! he was created in the very image of his maker, and after his likeness! the powers of thought, of reason, of imagination, and of memory, are wonderful powers, they are possessed by the Creator in their full perfection, and they have been communicated in a suitable degree to man the creatures also, though not in like manner to the brutes. Let it then be remembered, that all these bespeak the divine original of man. But that remarkable expression, of his being made in the image of God, seems also evidently to imply, that man was first made like to God, in respect to purity and holiness. The devils, no doubt, possesses much of those powers of reason and thought which were spoken of; and if

man had been endowed with these, and had been created in a state of wickedness, he might the more properly have been said to be made in the likeness of the devil, than in the holy likeness of his Creator. God then made man upright.—When our first forefathers came out of his Creator's hand, he was pure and holy like Him that made him, "He was created," as the apostle expresses it, "after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness."

Here let my readers stop to contemplate the pleasing subject of this fair creation of God. We read that God now "looked down on every thing which he had made—and behold it was very good;"—that is, every thing answered the end for which it was created, and every thing was perfect in its kind. The earth was not that disorder-ed place which since the fall it has become. The herbs and the trees yeilded freely their increase. Blight, and mildew, and famine, and scarcity, and poverty, and want were as yet unknown. Death had not entered with its attendant train of sorrows, sicknesses and pains. Adam, and his partner Eve dwelt peacefully in the garden of Eden, which they were employed to cultivate.—All nature smiled around them, and was drest, no doubt, in its most beautiful attire. Every thing was exactly suited to afford them happiness, and this favoured pair, without angry passions, without undue selfishness, without anxiety or distrust, and without murmur or complaint, enjoyed the good which God had given them, and lived in favour with their Maker.

But we have now to describe a most melancholy change in their condition. It has pleased the all-wise Creator, when he made man, to appoint a certain trial for him, which was meant to serve, no doubt, as a test of his love and obedience.—His trial consisted in his being forbid to eat of one tree which was in the middle of the garden of Eden, which was called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, while the fruit of all the rest of the trees might be freely eaten.

We have all of us our trials somewhat in the same manner now—thus, for instance, we may eat the food which is our own, and which is wholesome for us—we may take the rest which is necessary to refresh the body—we may indulge our natural affections and inclinations in the manner which God has ordained—but then we must not carry any thing to excess, and those are a number of things which we may in no case do. Oh! let us not take any forbidden pleasure, though it is put within our reach, but let us remember that it is placed there for the trial of our faith; just as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was placed within the sight of Adam's eye, and within the reach of his arm. “And God said to Adam, in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

The scriptures proceed to tell us that Eve was first tempted by the serpent, (namely, by the devil as is commonly supposed,) who said to her, in direct contradiction to God, that if she and her husband should eat of the forbidden fruit, “they should not die, but should become as gods knowing good and evil.”—“She then seeing the fruit was fair, and much to be desired to make one wise,

gathered some of it, and gave it to her husband which he did eat."

Oh wretched Adam, how art thou now fallen! thou hast believed in the enemy of God, instead of God himself, being tempted to this crime by her who was made to be a meet help for thee! how is thy gold become dross, and thine honour laid in the dust, and thy glory departed from thee!

Adam, by this act renounced his allegiance to God, and broke the condition on which the favour of his Maker had been suspended, and therefore the curse which had been threatened remained now to be executed—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, (it had been said) thou shall surely die." What this threatned death meant, the words do not, perhaps, distinctly shew. They must, however, be necessarily understood to imply, that he should forfeit his natural life, and be deprived of that happy state of existence, which, while obedient, he was intitled to enjoy—and that, instead of this, he should come under the curse of God. Here, however, the New Testament also comes in aid, for it teaches us, that "sin having thus entered the world, and death by sin—death in this manner passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; and that through this one man, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

Thus did Adam fall—by aiming to be as God, he lost his former rank as man, and by wickedly listening to the temptation of the devil, he appears to have become a sharer in his guilt, and consequently also in his condemnation.

Soon afier this event, our first parents are described as ashamed to meet the eye of God when



he appeared to them, as he was wont to do, in the garden; they hid themselves among the trees and said that they felt ashamed, because they were naked. Sin and Shame, it may be remarked, entered into the world together.

“ And the Lord God said, Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

It seems as if Adam, by this expression, meant partly to cast the blame on God who had given him the woman that had proved his tempter, and he also casts the blame partly on Eve, while she in the same self justifying spirit, replies to God, when he charges her with the guilt, “ The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.”

Our first parents, as we may plainly see, were now become poor guilty sinners—they were disposed to palliate and justify their crime, and thus to add sin to sin, just as is now the way with all wicked men. They also became, after this time, full of the dread of God, instead of the love of Him, and disposed to say to Him, as Peter did to our Saviour, when first called to by Him, “ Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

God immediately proceeds to pronounce the following curse upon them, “ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”—“ And unto Adam he said—Because thou hast harkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest

" not eat, cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.— In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the Lord sent him forth from the land of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

Such is the history of the fall; and soon afterwards we read that iniquity began to prevail in the world. Cain, the first born son of Adam, became the murderer of his brother. The whole earth was filled with violence. "God looked down on the children of men, to see if there were any that were righteous, but all flesh had corrupted his way before the Lord, and every imagination of man's heart was only evil continually, insomuch, that God is said (speaking after the manner of men) to have grieved him at his heart, and to have repented that he made man."

After bearing with the rebellious offspring of Adam for about two thousand years, it pleased the Almighty to drown the world with a flood, the family of Noah alone being excepted, who was found righteous. The great cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Tyre and Sidon were after this destroyed for their wickedness.

In order that true religion might be maintained, at least among one people, God separated to him-

self the single nation of the Jews, and made a covenant with them, and gave them his laws, and wrought many miracles among them. But even the Jews provoked him to wrath, and proved rebellious and unbelieving.

At length it pleased God in his infinite mercy, to send into this lost and ruined world, his Son Jesus Christ, as he had foretold he would do, even at the very time of the fall of Adam; for when that curse which has been already spoken of, was denounced, God, who in the midst of Judgment remembers mercy, had also declared, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, a promise which implies, that one sprung from the woman should come to destroy the power of the serpent or evil spirit, and to triumph over him.

The Jews, who had before persecuted the prophets, that had been sent unto them, persecuted also Jesus Christ, and proceeded to put him to death. Having thus filled up the measure of their iniquities, their city was taken and trodden down of the Gentiles, their people was led captive or destroyed, and they have become a by word and a proverb among the nations unto this day, as had been foretold,

But have then the other nations of the world been better than the Jews? No, the heathens around them were so wicked and abominable, that the Jews were ordered to cut them off. And since the publishing of Christianity in the world, how has wickedness prevailed in it! Read whatever history you will, you will read an account of little else than the vices and follies of our race. And what

a wicked world it is, that we now live in. How different is it from that peaceful happy Paradise, which we some time ago described! Well may it be said, that "the thorn and the thistle have grown up in it." Every where, alas! we see proofs of the fall; for what are all the present wars among nations, together with the bloody revolutions which take place in states; what are all the conflicts for power among the great, and all the complaining and repining among the men of low degree; what are the feuds and quarrels in private families; what the malice and evil speaking, the fraud and lying, the impurity and the drunkenness, the irreligion and prophaness, as well as the corruption even of Christianity itself—what are all these but so many consequences of the fall of Adam, and so many proofs of that corrupt nature, which has descended to all his children.

As the world has become sinful, no wonder that it has become miserable also. It is distressed, at this day, with so many evils, because it has so much that is offensive against God in it; "for the Lord has a controversy with it." And it is one part of his appointment, also, that men's own evil passions shall be a plague both to themselves and to each other. Death also, has been sent into the world, for ever since the days of Adam, that sentence has been executing, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." What sorrows and diseases have also been brought in together with death! What pangs to the dying, what affliction to the surviving friends! and above all, what terrors of conscience, and what a melancholy forebod-

ing of a day of future judgment afflict our guilty race!

It is exceeding important to be grounded in this history of the fall, and of the actual corruption of man which has followed from it. This story which we have now told, stands in the first pages of our Bible. It leads the way to all Christian truth, and without it, all our other religious knowledge will be of little use. For how shall we ever learn the necessity of any change in our character and condition, unless we first know that the natural state in which we find ourselves as children of Adam is altogether fallen and corrupt. We must therefore be born again. We have an old man within us, which by the means of Christianity, is to be put off; and we have to put on that new man, which is created after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. If men see not this natural corruption in themselves, and in the world around them, the reason of it is, that there is no light in them. They understand not the nature of real good and evil. Let such read the scriptures, there they will find that even the best men that ever lived have acknowledged their own natural corruption, saying, with one voice, that they were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and that they were by nature the children of wrath even as others." Let them study also the law of God: let them examine themselves by each of the Ten Commandments explained as our Saviour has taught us to explain them; and if they be not wilfully blind, they will thus learn the same lesson which the Fall of Adam, and the history of the world, both ancient and modern, unite to teach us. They will learn, I mean, the corruption of their own nature, and

the necessity which thence arise for that redemption which has been provided for us by Jesus Christ. For Christ is the second Adam. As Adam brought upon us the curse, so Christ has come down to us with the blessing. "And as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive:"—"the first man was from the earth; earthy—the second was the Lord from Heaven; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, so also shall we bear the image of the heavenly."

In all our religious enquiries, let, us therefore take this knowledge of the fall for our foundation, and then we shall proceed safely, and build securely; whereas they who set out in religion with the vain notion of the natural goodness of the heart of man, do but deceive themselves with a false philosophy, and indulge their own pleasing dreams, in defiance both of Scripture and of experience.



*An* H Y M N.

JESUS shall reign where'er the sun  
Doth his successive journies run;  
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Through him shall ceaseless prayer be made,  
And every guilty fear allay'd;  
His name like incense shall arise,  
With all our daily sacrifice.

Where'er he sends his healing pow'r,  
Death and the curse are known no more,  
In him the tribes of Adam, boast,  
More blessings than their father lost.

Let every mortal creature sing  
The honours of this heavenly king!  
By angels is his name ador'd;  
Ye saints on earth, O praise the Lord.

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